

Message Text

PAGE 01 STATE 199689
ORIGIN INR-07

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 SSM-03 PM-05 IO-13
/051 R

DRAFTED BY INR/RNA:AAVACCARO:DLM
APPROVED BY INR/RNA:PHSTODDARD
SSM:CWKONTOS

-----009554 230335Z /73

R 222119Z AUG 77
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO USMISSION SINAI
INFO AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY SANA

S E C R E T STATE 199689

E.O. 11652: XGDS-2

TAGS: EG, IS, PINR

SUBJECT: INTSUM 385 - AUGUST 22, 1977

WARNING NOTICE SENSITIVE SOURCES AND METHODS INVOLVED
NOT RELEASABLE TO FOREIGN NATIONALS--NOT RELEASABLE TO
CONTRACTORS OR CONTRACTOR CONSULTANTS

MOSCOW, KUWAIT, SANA FOR AMBASSADORS

LONDON FOR KINSOLVING

1. PALESTINIANS. THE PLO EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE LATE
THURSDAY ANNOUNCED THAT ITS POSITION TOWARD UN SECURITY
COUNCIL RESOLUTION 242 REMAINS THE SAME AS EXPRESSED BY
THE PALESTINE NATIONAL COUNCIL IN MARCH. AT THAT TIME,
SECRET

PAGE 02 STATE 199689

THE COUNCIL REJECTED THE RESOLUTION AND ANY "DEALINGS"
BASED ON IT BECAUSE IT IGNORED THE "PALESTINIAN PEOPLE AND
THEIR FIRM RIGHTS." THIS MAY NOT BE THE FINAL POSITION
OF THE PLO, WHICH PLANS FURTHER DISCUSSIONS NEXT WEEK.

2. THE STATEMENT OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, AS ANNOUNCED
BY ITS OFFICIAL SPOKESMAN, CRITICIZED US SECRETARY VANCE'S
RECENT ROUND OF TALKS IN THE MIDDLE EAST FOR "DISREGARDING"
PALESTINIAN RIGHTS. IT ALSO CONDEMNED THE ISRAELI DECISION

TO ESTABLISH FURTHER SETTLEMENTS IN THE WEST BANK AREA.

3. THERE ARE CONFLICTING REPORTS ON THE ROLES OF THE VARIOUS OUTSIDE ACTORS ON THE PALESTINIAN DECISION NOT TO ACCEPT RESOLUTION 242. WE ARE NOT CERTAIN WHETHER SYRIA ENCOURAGED THE PLO TO ACCEPT IT OR DISCOURAGED THEM FROM DOING SO. THIS ADVICE, HOWEVER, WAS NOT NECESSARILY THE DECISIVE ELEMENT IN THE PLO EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE DECISION TO REAFFIRM THE PLO'S REJECTION OF 242. FOR ITS PART, THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE THOUGHT THAT ACCEPTANCE WOULD GIVE UP TOO MUCH FOR MERELY TALKING TO THE US.

4. PLO OFFICIALS HAVE BEEN PRESSED BY SOME MODERATE ARAB LEADERS TO HELP BREAK THE DIPLOMATIC LOGJAM IN THE MIDDLE EAST BY TAKING A FIRM PUBLIC STEP TOWARD MODERATION SUCH AS ACCEPTANCE OF RESOLUTION 242, EVEN IN A QUALIFIED MANNER. THE PLO LEADERS, HOWEVER, APPARENTLY ARE DIVIDED OVER THIS ISSUE AND FEAR THEY WOULD GET NOTHING IN RETURN FOR SUCH A SIGNIFICANT POLICY SHIFT. RECENT MOVES BY THE ISRAELIS TO ENHANCE THEIR CONTROL OVER THE WEST BANK, MOREOVER, PROBABLY HAVE EXACERBATED THESE FEARS AND CONTRIBUTED TO PALESTINIAN HESITANCY TO COMPROMISE.

SECRET

PAGE 03 STATE 199689

5. THE PLO CENTRAL COUNCIL, THEORETICALLY BUT NOT ACTUALLY A MORE POWERFUL BODY THAN THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, IS SCHEDULED TO MEET IN DAMASCUS THIS WEEK. THE PLO'S STAND TOWARD RESOLUTION 242 PROBABLY WILL BE DISCUSSED AGAIN AT THAT MEETING.

6. CONCERNING ISRAEL'S RECENT MOVES ON THE WEST BANK, OUR UN MISSION REPORTED THAT EGYPT AND SOME OTHERS PREFERRED TO TAKE A WAIT AND SEE ATTITUDE RATHER THAN REQUEST A SECURITY COUNCIL MEETING NOW. ISRAEL'S UN AMBASSADOR APPEARED UNCOMFORTABLE ABOUT THE PROSPECT OF SUCH A MEETING, THE MISSION COMMENTED, AND HOPED THAT THE ARABS CAN BE PERSUADED TO DEFER ANY SECURITY COUNCIL DISCUSSION OF THE ISSUE.

7. A CLANDESTINE SOURCE REPORTED THAT EGYPT RECENTLY ISSUED ORDERS TO DEMOBILIZE THE 500-MAN PALESTINE LIBERATION ARMY (PLA) CONTINGENT BASED IN EGYPT AND TO MOVE THE PLA CAMPS OUT OF THE DELTA INTO THE DESERT. THE PLO REPORTEDLY VIEWS THIS ACTION AS AN EGYPTIAN MOVE TO PUT TEETH INTO THE CAIRO ACCORDS GOVERNING THE PALESTINIAN PRESENCE IN LEBANON, AS WELL AS A VOTE OF NO-CONFIDENCE IN ARAFAT AND A REJECTION OF A MEANINGFUL FUTURE FOR THE PALESTINIAN CAUSE, THE SOURCE SAID.
(SECRET/NOFORN/NOCONTRACT)

8. LEBANON. PLANS TO IMPLEMENT THE THIRD PHASE OF THE

SHTAWRAH AGREEMENT IN SOUTHERN LEBANON DO NOT SEEM TO BE PROGRESSING WELL. FIGHTING IN THE SOUTH CONTINUES AT THE SAME RELATIVELY HIGH LEVEL WHICH HAS PREVAILED FOR THE PAST SEVERAL WEEKS. NIGHTLY CROSS-BORDER OPERATIONS ARE BEING CONDUCTED BY THE ISRAELIS IN SUPPORT OF THE CHRISTIANS WHILE THE PALESTINIANS HAVE SHOWN NO SIGN OF TRYING TO IMPLEMENT A CEASEFIRE OR TO WITHDRAW TO THE ARQOUB.

SECRET

PAGE 04 STATE 199689

9. MOREOVER, WE HAVE YET TO RECEIVE ANY REPORTS THAT THE SYRIANS ARE PRESSURING THE PALESTINIANS TO IMPLEMENT THE AGREEMENT IN SOUTHERN LEBANON. IN FACT, THE ENTIRE PALESTINIAN-SYRIAN RELATIONSHIP IS SOMEWHAT CONFUSED. THE SYRIANS FACE SEVERAL PROBLEMS IN THEIR ATTEMPTS TO CONTROL THE PALESTINIANS. IN THE FIRST PLACE, THE PLO HIERARCHY IS STILL UNABLE TO DECIDE ON AN ULTIMATE POLICY REGARDING THE PALESTINIAN POSITION IN LEBANON. EVEN WHEN THE PLO LEADERSHIP HAS AGREED IN THE PAST TO IMPLEMENT VARIOUS SYRIAN-SUPPORTED POLICIES IN LEBANON, IT OFTEN HAS GONE BACK ON ITS AGREEMENT BECAUSE THE RANK AND FILE REFUSE TO GO ALONG.

10. THE SYRIANS ALSO FACE A CHALLENGE FROM RIVAL ARAB STATES FOR INFLUENCE WITHIN THE PALESTINIAN MOVEMENT, SOMETHING WHICH UNDERCUTS THEIR ABILITY TO DEAL WITH THE PLO. IN ORDER TO ADVANCE DAMASCUS' INTERESTS, THE SYRIANS APPARENTLY HAVE FORGED A CLOSE ALLIANCE WITH SALAH KHALAF, WITH WHOM THEY NEGOTIATED THE SHTAWRAH AGREEMENT. TO COUNTER THE SYRIANS, OTHER ARAB STATES HAVE THEIR OWN SOURCES OF INFLUENCE WITHIN THE PLO. FOR EXAMPLE:

(A) IRAQ HAS USED THE ALF AND IS MAKING CONSIDERABLE PROGRESS IN EXPANDING THIS ANTI-SYRIAN ELEMENT.

(B) SAUDI ARABIA CONTINUES TO RELY ON PALESTINIAN MODERATES SUCH AS KHALID AL-HASAN.

(C) EGYPT HAS USED THE JOINT EGYPTIAN-PALESTINIAN COMMITTEE.

SECRET

PAGE 05 STATE 199689

(D) LIBYA CONTINUES TO SPEND MONEY TO BUY SUPPORT FROM VARIOUS REJECTIONIST GROUPS.

THESE RIVAL ARAB MANEUVERS HAVE INCREASED SYRIAN CONCERNS THAT NO SETTLEMENT IN LEBANON WILL BE A VICTORY FOR THE REJECTIONISTS, THE IRAQIS, AND OTHER ANTI-SYRIAN ELEMENTS.

11. THE SYRIANS, MOREOVER, APPEAR TO BE HAVING DIFFICULTY IN DEALING WITH THE CHRISTIANS IN LEBANON. IN SOUTHERN LEBANON, THE INCREASINGLY OPEN CONTACT BETWEEN THE CHRISTIANS AND THE ISRAELIS IS AN EMBARRASSMENT TO SYRIA. TO INCREASE THEIR CONTROL IN THE SOUTH, THE SYRIANS HAVE REINFORCED THEIR UNITS STATIONED NORTH OF THE LITANI. MOREOVER, THE CHRISTIANS IN NORTHERN LEBANON ARE ALSO A CONCERN FOR DAMASCUS. THE SYRIANS THEMSELVES ARE WELL AWARE THAT THE CHRISTIANS THERE NEITHER FULLY ACCEPT NOR TRUST THEM.

12. IN THIS CONTEXT OF LITTLE SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS IN FINDING A SOLUTION TO LEBANON'S PROBLEMS, LEBANON'S CHARGE IN CAIRO HAS ASKED THE ARAB LEAGUE TO EXTEND THE MANDATE OF THE PEACE KEEPING FORCE FOR ANOTHER SIX MONTHS. THE CURRENT MANDATE EXPIRES IN OCTOBER. (SECRET)

13. EGYPT. TOP ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL LEADERS WILL MEET THIS WEEK TO DISCUSS A PROGRAM OF REDUCTIONS IN SUBSIDIES ON BASIC COMMODITIES, THE ISSUE THAT SPARKED VIOLENT RIOTING THROUGHOUT EGYPT IN JANUARY. NEITHER THE TIMETABLE FOR INSTITUTING THE PROGRAM NOR ITS DETAILS HAVE BEEN DISCLOSED, BUT WE WOULD NOT EXPECT IT TO OCCUR UNTIL THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY HAS DISCUSSED IT AND THE PUBLIC HAS THEREBY HAD A CHANCE TO ABSORB ITS RAMIFICATIONS. THE AL-AHRAM STORY REPORTING THE FORTHCOMING MEETING, IN FACT, IS PROBABLY THE BEGINNING OF AN EFFORT TO HELP THE PUBLIC UNDERSTAND THE PROGRAM AND THE NEED
SECRET

PAGE 06 STATE 199689

FOR IT, A PROCESS THAT WAS LACKING IN JANUARY. THAT THE GOVERNMENT IS MORE AWARE NOW OF THE NEED FOR ADVANCE "PUBLIC RELATIONS" IS BORNE OUT BY THE FACT THAT THE STORY HIGHLIGHTED A RELATED INCREASE IN THE MINIMUM WAGE, WHICH WOULD BE MADE POSSIBLE BY THE BUDGETARY SAVINGS RESULTING FROM THE SUBSIDY REDUCTIONS. (LIMITED OFFICIAL USE)

14. EGYPT-LIBYA. THERE ARE SOME INDICATIONS THAT TENSIONS MAY EASE SOMEWHAT IN THE NEAR FUTURE. AGREEMENT HAS REPORTEDLY BEEN REACHED FOR BOTH SIDES TO PULL BACK TROOPS FROM THE IMMEDIATE BORDER AREA. DESPITE SUCH REPORTS, HOWEVER, WE BELIEVE SADAT WILL CONTINUE TO PURSUE ANY MEANS, INCLUDING THE USE OF FORCE, TO OVERTHROW THE LIBYAN LEADER.

15. EMBASSY TRIPOLI HAS NOTED THAT CONTINUED LIBYAN MILITARY MOBILIZATION, ON TOP OF RAMADAN-ASSOCIATED ACTIVITIES, HAS IMPOSED AN EVEN GREATER BURDEN ON THE PERFORMANCE OF THE LIBYAN ECONOMY AND ADMINISTRATION. QADHAFI, NEVERTHELESS, REPORTEDLY REMAINS FIRMLY IN

CONTROL AND IS CARRYING OUT LIBYA'S ORCHESTRATED DOMESTIC AND FOREIGN POLICY WITH RELATIVE SKILL.

16. HIS EFFORTS TO RECRUIT VOLUNTEERS FOR HIS FIGHT AGAINST EGYPT HAS MET WITH MIXED SUCCESS, HOWEVER. THE RECRUITMENT EFFORT, WHICH BEGAN IN LATE JULY, WAS DIRECTED PRIMARILY AT TWO MAIN SOURCES OF MILITARY MANPOWER. QADHAFI APPARENTLY PUT HEAVY PRESSURE ON "REJECTIONIST" PALESTINIAN LEADERS TO RETURN THE VITAL SUPPORT WHICH HE HAD PROVIDED THEM DURING THEIR STRUGGLE IN LEBANON. THESE PALESTINIAN GUERRILLAS WERE THE MOST DESIRABLE RECRUITS BECAUSE OF THEIR MILITARY TRAINING
SECRET

PAGE 07 STATE 199689

AND COMBAT EXPERIENCE. THESE VOLUNTEERS, WHICH ACCORDING TO ONE REPORT NUMBER OVER 1,000 MEN, WERE FOR THE MOST PART SENT DIRECTLY TO THE EASTERN FRONT AND AT LEAST ONE COMMANDO BATTALION IS KNOWN TO HAVE MAINTAINED UNIT INTEGRITY.

17. THE SECOND MAIN SOURCE OF MANPOWER WAS REPORTEDLY NORMAL VOLUNTEERS PRIMARILY BUT NOT EXCLUSIVELY RECRUITED FROM THE ARAB OR MUSLIM WORLD. DIFFICULTIES WERE ENCOUNTERED HERE BECAUSE RECRUITS WERE GENERALLY UNTRAINED. THESE VOLUNTEERS WERE SENT TO TRAINING CAMPS UPON THEIR ARRIVAL IN LIBYA, WITH REGULAR LIBYAN OFFICERS REPORTEDLY ASSIGNED TO TRAIN THEM AND FORM THEM INTO INDIVIDUAL UNITS. ONCE TRAINING IS COMPLETED, UNITS AND THEIR LIBYAN OFFICERS WILL REPORTEDLY BE GIVEN OPERATIONAL ASSIGNMENTS SUBORDINATE TO THE LIBYAN ARMY COMMAND AND CONTROL. ACCORDING TO ONE UNCONFIRMED SOURCE, THE TOTAL NUMBER OF RECRUITS, INCLUDING GUERRILLAS, INDEPENDENT PALESTINIANS AND OTHER MUSLIMS HAS NOW REACHED 8,000 MEN. WHILE THIS NUMBER SEEMS HIGH, IT IS CERTAIN THAT LIBYA HAS BEEN ENGAGED IN A MAJOR RECRUITMENT CAMPAIGN.

18. QADHAFI REPORTEDLY PLANS TO FORM A NEW "NATIONAL ARAB ARMY," BUT ONLY 2,000 OF THE 8,000 RECRUITS AGREED TO SIGN UP BECAUSE IT REQUIRED AN UNSPECIFIED ENLISTMENT PERIOD. THE BULK OF THE VOLUNTEERS APPARENTLY EXPECT TO FIGHT EGYPT AND GO HOME.

19. IT IS POSSIBLE THAT QADHAFI HAS PURCHASED SUCH A LARGE INVENTORY OF MILITARY EQUIPMENT WITH AN EYE TO THE "PAN ARAB ARMY." HIS ARMY HAS 2,000 TANKS AND SOME 200 FIGHTER AIRCRAFT. THESE NUMBERS FAR EXCEED THE NEEDS OF HIS 25,000-MAN ARMY AND 4,000-MAN AIR FORCE. THE IDEA OF A PAN ARAB ARMY, HOWEVER, PROVIDES A RATIONALE AS TO WHY QADHAFI UNDERTOOK A MAJOR RECRUITMENT CAMPAIGN.
SECRET

PAGE 08 STATE 199689

ALTHOUGH NOT SPECIFICALLY STATED, THERE WAS A DEFINITE
IMPLICATION THAT THE NEW ARMY WOULD BE CALLED ON TO
FIGHT ON A LARGER PAN ARAB FRONT AGAINST MORE OF LIBYA'S
ENEMIES THAN JUST EGYPT. (SECRET/NOFORN/NOCONTRACT) CHRISTOPHER

SECRET

<< END OF DOCUMENT >>

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 22-Sep-1999 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLITICAL SUMMARIES, INTELLIGENCE ASSESSMENTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 22-Aug-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977STATE199689
Document Source: ADS
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: INR/RNA:AAVACCARO:DLM
Enclosure: NOT RELEASABLE TO CONTRACTORS OR CONSULTANTS
Executive Order: 11652 XGDS-2
Errors: n/a
Expiration:
Film Number: D770303-0699
Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t197708117/baaaetor.tel
Line Count: 280
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, TEXT ON MICROFILM
Message ID: fde85751-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN INR
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 6
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 20-Apr-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1446101
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: INTSUM 385 - AUGUST 22, 1977
TAGS: PINR, EG, IS, XF
To: SINAI INFO KUWAIT MULTIPLE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/fde85751-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009